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Community College CAMPUS NEWS

Serving Colleges
in New York (LI,
NYC and Upstate)
and New England.

Volume 5, Issue 5
Take! Free on Campus!

Transferring to a 4-year college

June 2012

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**Laura LaVacca
and Darren Johnson**
Campus News

We know. Every now and then you'll read a press release from your community college about a student transferring after graduation to some Ivy League or comparable college.

Great for them. But the rest of you will likely have to pick from the multiple other four-year schools in your region. And most of them are waiting for you. The writers of this article attended Hofstra and LIU, respectively, two colleges that get a good number of students from Long Island feeder high schools and community colleges, for example.

Another great choice for transfers is Adelphi University, a medium-large institution with the personal touch of a smaller college, but the amenities of a bigger college including sports and the arts.

Stony Brook is the best public four-year choice downstate, matched by UAlbany upstate. They have D-I sports but are so big, it's easy to get lost.

While a public SUNY has seamless transfer, the private schools may be just as liberal in interpreting your transcripts.

Hofstra University located in Hempstead, has about 1000 transfer students a year both locally, nationally and internationally. They offer many academic programs and specialize in education, the sciences and speech pathology. Perhaps their best feature, they offer a rolling admission so that students may complete the admission process at any time.

"This was by far their best feature. I totally chose



Some other schools only accepted in September," stated Lauren C., marketing major who transferred from NCC.

Lisa Rouse, psychology major, had a similar positive experience, "I was surprised at how smooth the transition was. I sat

with someone, figured out what credits transferred, registered, and that was that!"

While Hofstra has a rolling admission, Adelphi is another option located on Long Island that has many support services for transfers. They boast that they make transferring from other colleges extremely easy. They also strive to give students as many transfer credits as possible. Adel-

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Adelphi has a committee that only deals with transfer students; the goal is to attract, retain

Hofstra because I graduated in December and wanted to apply and start at school right away.

See you in September, somewhere...

Darren Johnson
Campus News

Gee, sadly, by the time you read this article, summer will be about half over, and the fall semester is on the horizon. Here are the things you should do between now and then to make sure your fall runs smoothly, whether it is at a community college or whether you are transferring.

No. 1: Plan Your Textbooks

This advice not only saves you money, but will give you a leg up on your future fellow classmates as you will have the summer to casually inspect the reading that is to come.

Once you have finalized your schedule, contact all of your assigned professors and get the exact names of the textbooks, author names and ISBN numbers, and then buy them used on sites like half.com or amazon. You can easily find a professor's email address on the campus web site. Don't be shy. This is also a way for you to make yourself known to the professor.

While a few professors may at times seem beholden to textbook companies for

whatever reason, most want to see you save a few bucks and will quickly respond. But the cost savings may be more than a few bucks. In a past issue of Campus News, we found textbooks that were commonly assigned at area community colleges for over \$100 priced at just a few bucks online. The exact same editions. Why give your hard-earned money to the bookstore?

Whether you're coming back to this college or going to a 4-year school, here's your to-do list.

If you can't get a hold of the prof (some don't check email in the summer, others may be adjuncts and not listed on the campus site), just call the department secretary. You can figure out the department by the type of course it is. For example, a history course will likely be in Social Sciences. Poke around the web site and figure it out.

When you're in that first class and already have read a few chapters while your fellow classmates still haven't bought the book, you will become an instant favorite with the professor.

No. 2: Get an iPad

The invention of the tablet computer will change your study habits, and the iPad really is the way to go. The bigger screen and more stately operating system just make it more serious than, say, a Kindle Fire.

Don't cry poverty. I just saved you a ton on books! If you go to apple.com and click on the refurbished section (it's in the Store, hidden practically at the bottom of the page), you can sometimes find an iPad I for under \$300. I recently got an iPad II for \$319. Don't be scared off by the refurbished tag. These are new machines for all intents and purposes and warranted. I think the idea of "refurbished" is just a sales gimmick for excess stock.

With an iPad, you can research while the TV is on, bring it with you to coffee houses, log-in to your campus portal. You will be a more engaged student.

Eventually, you will transfer to a four-year school, where all of those rich kids will have grown up on Apple products (CW Post gives a free iPad to every new freshman, for example); and you will come in adept and

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Anthony J. Mullen,
National Teacher of The Year

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Looking for a career? Consider the non-profit world.

David L. Podos
Mohawk Valley CC

Student loan debt is now over one trillion dollars, more than our total credit card debt, for the first time in history. As of this writing, overall unemployment rates are above 8%, and many college students nearing the completion of their degrees and eager to enter the labor force are understandably quite nervous. In an age of pervasive gloom and doom, can we blame them? While there are signs of an improving economy, albeit slow, we have a long way to get back to where we were prior to 2008.

Lately, one of the hottest topics in my economics class has been the discussion of jobs. When students ask me what their prospects are for gainful employment, I often find myself hard pressed to give them an answer. For the most part, the areas of employment that used to be sacrosanct and immune from economic ups and downs (health care, education, and technology) even these are facing the tough realities of this economy and are ratcheting back on new hires, increasing layoffs, and offering, through attrition, incentive packages for early retirement.

That is not to say that hospitals, schools, and businesses are not hiring doctors, nurses, teachers, information technologists, engineers, managers, etc., because, in fact, they are. Many students still gravitate toward these professions; however, employers are simply not hiring at the volume they were five years ago.

There is one industry, however, that I feel is oftentimes overlooked by students, and that is the not-for-profit (NFP) world of business. Now, I approach this with some bias as I have spent the better part of my professional life (before entering the profession of higher education) managing small-to-mid size NFP businesses. That said, I will be blunt and tell you that NFPs are facing much of the same challenges as their for profit counterparts, and often with much more complexity addressing the challenges of tight budgets, maximizing efficiency and effectiveness, all the while with shrinking resources. So why, may you ask, do I suggest to at least entertain the notion of finding employment in an industry that seems to be no better off and with no more guarantee of long-term employment than any other business today? Well, first,

allow me to explain to you what a NFP is, then, I'll give you some answers.

Not-for-profits are organizations where trustees/and or shareholders do not benefit financially from any monies realized by the NFP. All monies earned or received (grants, bequests) by the business must be utilized to support the overall mission of the business and nothing else. Furthermore, as an NFP the organization is exempt from certain federal and state taxes as well as other local taxes. The missions of most NFPs often follow the particular needs of the community/region that they operate in. For example, you may have a local HIV/AIDS clinic in town, or perhaps an agency that works with people recovering from mental illness or drug recovery. Compare this with a for-profit entity where the first priority is to earn a profit, period!

Many people bypass altogether the thought of considering employment with a not-for-profit often due to the misunderstanding that the employee does not get paid. It's a non-profit, right? Or, when you do get paid it is always for poverty wages. The biggest misconception is that NFPs do not pay employees or only pay poverty wages is so erroneous

important and a "living wage" is what you will receive. If you happen to be in the higher echelons of NFP management, of course, your salary will be higher. But, salary aside, here are the other benefits.

If you are the kind of person who has a burning desire to make a difference in your community/region, a NFP business may just be where you need to go. The cliché "what money can't buy" very often rings true in the not-for-profit world. As an employee, you will have the satisfaction knowing that your efforts have helped someone to get off drugs, stop drinking, find affordable housing, offer after school activities to disenfranchised students, or perhaps being a spokesperson for animal rights in your area while providing affordable animal care and adoption services. Because NFPs must utilize all budgetary money to accomplish their mission, you as an employee can see real results and often quite quickly. It is these outcomes that fuel your burning desire to make a difference and, in return, can make you a very effective and dedicated employee.

Even though most not-for-profits cannot compete with salaries from for profit entities, they usually offer a generous benefits package to make up the difference, which can be a big draw for many prospective employees. Finally, when and if you do make the decision to enter into the for profit world of business, you will have acquired many skills that are directly transferable. Having worked in the NFP sector will have provided you the valuable skills to manage an organization that requires a high degree of collaboration and creativeness, diversity sensitivity, and the ability to often work with scarce resources, all skills that are eagerly sought after by the for-profit sector.

There are nuances, however, that can create quite a challenge if you are entering into the NFP world as an Executive Director. These hurdles you will encounter will be worth it, because it will force you to use your skills of communication, collaboration, negotiation, management, and creative solutions in goals acquisition. You will not



Yes, NFP workers get paid.

have one boss. Your boss will be a board of directors that every NFP (by law) must have in place before they receive their not-for-profit status. Your board could be made up of from six to 20 or more members, and you will need to draw upon all your skills as an affective administrator to work harmoniously with this very powerful group of people. There is a saying that the executive director serves at the good will of the board, and that is absolutely true! The board of directors' job (unpaid) is one of governance and to establish all policies and procedures. A board of directors should not get involved in the everyday management of the organization; this is left up to the executive director and his and or her staff. This can be the greatest challenge for a director, and you will need to work within this delicate and sometimes frustrating relationship if you are to be successful.

Not-for-profits provide essential services to our communities, our neighbors, our friends, and our families, which benefit us all. They need a dedicated, skilled, and educated workforce. So, when you are looking for that dream job, you may just find it in the nearly two million NFP businesses in the United States. But a word of caution, you might just find yourself in the best position you ever had, and that is not a bad place to be.

David L. Podos is an adjunct instructor for the Center for Social Sciences, Business and Information Sciences.

Your efforts will have helped someone quit drugs or find housing and an education.

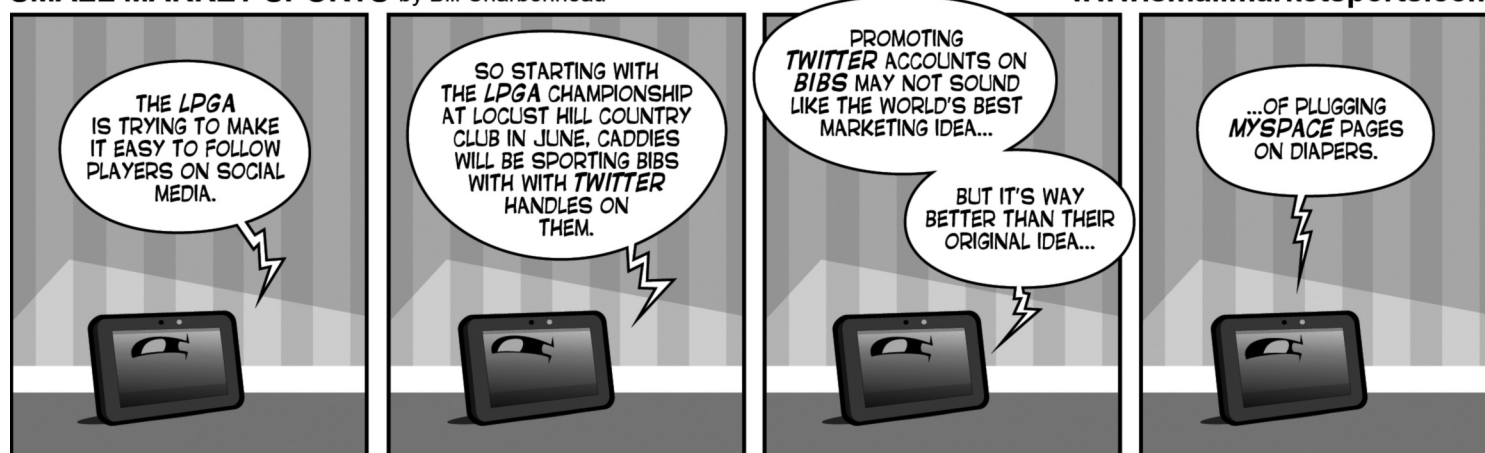
that it justifies some clarification.

The reality is, NFPs are economic engines contributing to the overall economic prosperity of this country. For example, in my county alone, (Oneida County, N.Y.), there are approximately 1,382 NFP businesses that have nearly two billion dollars in total income along with assets totaling over three billion! These businesses employ literally thousands of people providing payrolls to families who spend a portion of their earnings on everyday necessities, which in turn supports thousands of businesses who in return can add to their work force. Now let's be clear about another important aspect, and that is pay. The truth is that many NFPs for the most part have a difficult time keeping pace with wages that are offered by for profit companies. Remember, they have to put back any money earned and/or received to solely support their mission, not solely to raise wages or give large bonuses. You may wonder why I suggest that students stop and take a look at this industry? Well, here are your answers.

First off, having a large salary may not be your first priority in finding work. Yes, making a "living wage" is im-

SMALL MARKET SPORTS by Bill Charbonneau

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Our writer's Q&A with Brad Meltzer

Marie Frankson
Campus News

Brad Meltzer, award-winning political thriller author of books like “The Inner Circle” and host of the History Channel’s show “Brad Meltzer’s Decoded” took time away from being a leading conspiracy theorist and from organizing his upcoming book tour to answer some questions about being an author and about his book “The Inner Circle”. Brad Meltzer grew up in Brooklyn, New York and then moved to South Florida. He received a degree from the University of Michigan, graduated from Columbia Law School, and was selected for the prestigious Columbia Law Review.

Q. How'd you get started writing?

It wasn't until I graduated from college. I was coming out of the University of Michigan and I had a job offer from the man who used to run Games magazine. He told me, “If you love the job, you'll stay. If you hate it, you'll leave a year later with some money in your pocket.” Since I had some debt to pay off, that seemed like a fair deal. So I moved all my stuff to Boston. But when I got there, the pub-

nice. Once they realize you're writing fiction, and not looking for an expose, they love to talk. And that's the only way to get the details real. Also, try to find people who recently left the job you're trying to research. Those're the ones you want to meet (funny, honest, and no longer worried about impressing the boss).

Q. How did you handle rejections from publishers?

I gave their e-mail addresses to my mother. You don't know pain until you've met Teri Meltzer. Fear it.

Q. How long does it take to write a book?

About a year, to a year and a half. I spend about two months doing character sketches (Who are these people? What are they like?) and anywhere from two to six months researching. The rest of the time, I'm writing (and playing Parcheesi).

Q. Do you know the ending when you start?

I know what happens to the main characters simply because I have to. Each book is a journey. Ben, Sara,

Michael, Oliver, Charlie, Harris, Matthew, Viv, Wes, Rogo — each of them is a different person by the time the last page hits. So I need to know where they're going. Still, a

novel is a process. It takes me over a year. During that year, I'm constantly changing my mind, adding new twists, and moving things around.

Q. Do you outline?

Only about fifty to a hundred pages at a time. That way, I'm in control, but there's still plenty of room to let the creative process happen. If I just start typing and say “Let's see where the day takes me,” I'll just meander around and it'll be a rambling mess.

Q. What's a typical day like for writing? (Do you commit to finishing a particular scene or commit to X amount of pages?)

I get up, I walk around the block, and then I sit down with my imaginary friends. At the end of the day, I try not to count pages, but I can't help myself. I'm sad that way.

Q. Where'd the idea for “The Inner Circle” come from?

It all came from a private conversation I had with a former President of the United States. I'll never forget it. We were talking about how hard it was to keep a secret and make sure you're not overheard when you're in the White House. And when a real President whispers something like that to you, you pay attention. But as I looked back through history, I realized the problem dated back to George Washington himself, who devised a secret group that would serve just the President. They weren't military men. They were regular citizens. Just like us. Washington called them The Culper



Ring — and they were the secret weapon of the Revolutionary War, even though they were never in most history books. You're telling me the first president of the U.S. had a secret spy group that saved our country? I'm interested. And as I talked to my National Security folks, we kept coming back to one idea: who says this secret group was ever disbanded? Who says it doesn't exist today? When someone in National Security said to me: “I wish we had The Culper Ring today” — that's when I know I had the plot for the book.

Q: ‘At the end of the day, I try not to count pages, but I can't help myself.’

Your previous novels have been set in Washington, D.C., in places like the White House and the Supreme Court. What made you decide to use the National Archives as the setting for your upcoming novel?

I came to visit and fell in love. Truly. Lost history...secret documents...long-forgotten letters from Presidents and other big shots — all of which tell the true history of our nation. How could a history nut not fall in love? Plus, they let me hold the Declaration of Independence.

Q. So it was all based on a visit to the Archives?

A few years back, I got a call from Homeland Security asking me if I'd come in and brainstorm different ways for terrorists to attack the U.S. My first thought was, “If they're calling me, we've got bigger problems than anyone thinks.” But they'd seen the research in my books. And they know I have

good sources, so they invited me in. I was honored to be a part of the Red Cell program. They'd pair me with a Secret Service guy and a chemist — and they'd give us a target — and we'd destroy major cities in an hour. It's not the kind of day where you go home feeling good. You go home terrified, because you see how easy it is to kill us. On lunch breaks, I'd be talking to all the national security folks — and they're the ones who helped me tease out the plot of “The Inner Circle”. They're the ones who taught me what else every President needs — plus I had

what one former President gave me. But once I saw the Archives, I knew I had a place to tell that tale.

Q: One of the recurring themes in your novels is how greatness comes from choices ordinary people make every day. (“I don't believe in destiny. I believe in history” – a great line from “The Inner Circle”). What do you think is the origin of this ethos?

Blame my parents. My Mom especially. She grew up poor (though she'd hate that term and never use it). She didn't make it past high school. But she was the most amazing person I ever knew. Once, I took her to the White House — and as a decorator, I couldn't wait for her to be impressed by the decor. She took one look around and said, “Unga patchke,” which is slang for “Overdone. Feh.” It was the White House! She hated snobs, she hated phonies, she hated rich obnoxious jerks who can only talk about what kind of car they drive. And

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‘Where I grew up, writing wasn't a “real job,” and thankfully it still isn't.’

lisher left the magazine. (Surprise!) The whole reason I went there was to work for him. I thought I'd wrecked my life. I had no idea what to do. So I did what all of us would do in that situation. I said, “I'm gonna write a novel.” And I just started writing. Every day, I just fell more and more in love with the process.

Q. Did you always know you wanted to be a writer?

No, but I always liked writing. Even back in high school, I tried to write all my papers using tons of dialogue. But it never hit me until I left college. Where I grew up, writing wasn't “a real job.” And, thankfully, it still isn't.

Q. Where do you get your ideas?

Research, research, research. You can invent all the stuff you want, but if it doesn't smell real, readers will know in a nanosecond (and rip your head off). To me, fiction is at its best when it has one foot in reality. That's why I need to go out and see the places myself. I need to see what they look like, and smell like, and taste like (yum, hamburger) — and those details drive the ideas. Everything else is a gift from God.

Q. Locations like the White House, Congress, and the Supreme Court, even Disney World — how do you research these places?

Call up and ask. Seriously. If there's one thing I've learned (besides that ice doesn't get gum out of your hair), it's that people are genuinely

Bill seeks to regulate local TV, cyber news

Corydon B. Dunham

Author, "Government Control of News"

A proposed new plan for government control of television news, and perhaps Internet news, is now pending before the Federal Communications Commission. It would enable the government to suppress opposing points of view, reduce diversity and chill speech.

The new Localism, Balance and Diversity Doctrine has much in common with the FCC's old Fairness Doctrine – a policy the agency itself found deterred and suppressed news and chilled speech and which it revoked in 1987. An FCC-sponsored Future of Media Study has recommended that the Localism Doctrine proceeding be ended as ill advised but FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski has refused; the administrator of the White House's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Cass R. Sunstein, has long recommended that the government regulate news content broadcast by stations to advance the incumbent government's political and social objectives.

The new doctrine would suppress news, impose unnecessary and heavy burdens on television station news and be enforced by threats of license termination from both the FCC and a local control board at each station. Under the proposed plan, news broadcast by television stations would have to satisfy government criteria for "localism" in production and news coverage – as well as government criteria for balance

and viewpoint diversity.

Internet news sites stand to be affected as well. The FCC is planning to transfer the broadcast spectrum used by local television to the Internet and the agency already has begun regulating the Internet.

Five federal communications commissioners in a central government agency in Washington, D.C., would review local news. The majority vote of three commissioners appointed by the president would make a final determination of news acceptability, overriding the news judgments of thousands of independent, local TV reporters and editors. The stations would be threatened with loss of their licenses to broadcast if found to be non-compliant.

In addition, a local control board would be appointed for each television station to monitor its programming, including news, and recommend against license renewal if board members concluded the station is not complying with the FCC policy. This would impose a new blanket of government control over news. Much of the proposed new rule has not been made public including, for example, who would appoint the members of the local boards.

Requiring journalists to comply with a central government agency's policy on how to report the news and what the news should be means those journalists would no longer be free and independent of government. If the broadcast press is not free and independent, it cannot act as a watchdog for the public, which is its constitutional role.

Campus News reaches community college students at 20 campuses!

Transfer (cont. from cover)

phi offers many programs to help students transition. There are transfer days held, in which students can mingle and meet other new students as well as old ones. Their transfer days also include: career development workshops, lunch with senior administrators and faculty, campus tours and a meeting with current transfer students.

Esther Goodcuff, the Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, explains the dedication of Adelphi to transfer students, "For more than two years, Adelphi University has had an active committee that focuses ONLY on the needs of transfer students – from the time that they inquire through post enrollment. This Transfer Initiatives Committee has gathered data from focus groups of prospective students and, as a result, has put into place a number of initiatives meant to attract, enroll and retain transfers."

Transfer events also occur the first week of each month. They may include nights of bowling, sports tournaments, luncheons and other workshops designed to help students study and be successful.

Goodcuff continues noting: "Adelphi University truly values its transfer students. We enroll almost as many new transfer students each year as we do new freshmen."

The College of St. Rose in Albany

is similar to Adelphi in its size, quality and breadth of offerings and wide range of extra-curriculars. Usually Adelphi and St. Rose compete for Division II sports titles.

The public U-Mass system is renowned for its quality. Lowell is an example of a solid transfer college there. Roger Williams is a classy, quality private college in New England.

Nyack College feeds from downstate New York community colleges and prides itself on getting students out on time. Similar on Long Island is St. Joseph's and in the City, St. Francis.

Mercy College with multiple campuses just north of the City has an excellent mix of quality and personal touch to ensure success for transfers.

Graduating in four years is a big deal. Each year extra it takes to enter the workforce is a year less of earnings and earned experience that could create a drag for a lifetime.

Five Towns College on Long Island features intensive training in a handful of fields, and is especially known for its music and recording programs.

Three private colleges outside the region also seek out community college transfers: Stevenson in Maryland and the College of the Sciences in Philadelphia both get a good number of students from New York and New England. RIT is renowned in the sciences in New York's Western Tier.

Checklist (cont. from cover)

on equal technological footing.

No. 3: Get in Shape

The weather is nice. Would it really kill you to stop at your local high school four or five days a week and jog a mile or two?

If you are a traditional age student – this is it. You will never have better athletic and recovering ability than right now. If not now, therefore, when?

Once you get to college, you will be under stress and fill the void with deep-fried-everything at the campus food court. If you build a foundation now, you can at least weather the storm a bit better when those mozzarella sticks come a-calling. You know it's going to happen in September; may as well lose a few pounds now to compensate for that grease you will eat.

No. 4: Take Just One More Summer Course

Take a load off – for the fall. Some colleges have a second summer session that starts in July. Community colleges are super-cheap for NYS residents, as low as \$140 a credit. If you are a resident of anywhere in the state, including New York City, you can attend any SUNY or CUNY community college at the reduced rate relatively easily. Some far-flung colleges in the system have online courses, even. Poke around suny.com and check out the 30 community colleges to see who is offering what. All SUNY credits transfer to each SUNY.

If you're working for, say, \$10/hour, you can pick up a few extra hours – 42 to be exact – and pay for that three-credit freshman comp or intro to

chemistry. Get it out of the way. When fall comes, you can then take the kinds of courses you want to take.

No. 5 Sign Up for the Max

When I was a student, I would always sign up for 18 credits for the fall and spring semesters (you pay the same rate anywhere between 12 and 18 credits in New York), and then usually drop the most problematic course once the semester got going. If I were having a really bad semester, I could drop two courses and still keep my financial aid (financial aid drops if you go below 12 credits).

But if you start at 12 credits, you have no wiggle room. Sign up for 18. Who knows, maybe you'll somehow make it work and then be really ahead for the spring semester.

If you maintain the full credit load, even if you do get a poor grade in a course or two, it will be balanced out better, as well. For example, if you get all A's and an F with 12 credits, your GPA is .33 lower than if you are taking the full 18 credits.

Of course, many students would officially withdraw from the course with the F in that latter scenario, so they would end up with a 4.0 and 15 credits. In the 12-credit scenario, the student is stuck, unless he wants to risk losing financial aid by dropping the problematic course.

Be smart about college, and you will get a two-year degree in two years or less and a four-year degree on-time or earlier, as well. Or else be one of those professional students who after many years still can't tie together the loose ends!



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Netflix goes to town with midlife movies

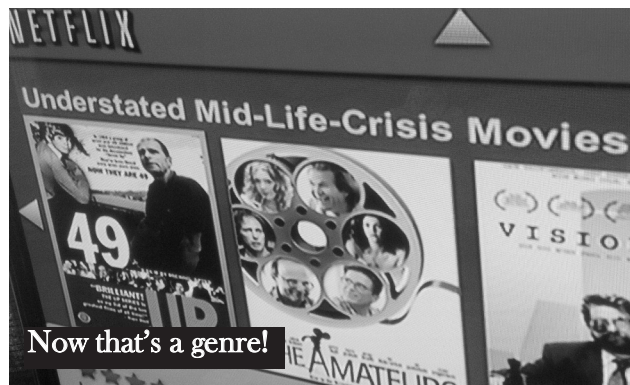
Darren Johnson
Campus News

Welcome back to “It’s New to You,” the column about hidden gems on services like Netflix. You can find my older columns on www.nu2u.info.

There’s a lot to wade through on Netflix, and practically everything on the site is rated three-and-a-half stars. Many of the titles on there did not really do much box office in their day, so you likely missed them and they are thus “new to you.”

Recently, I came upon a new category on the site – “Understated Mid-Life-Crisis Movies.” Yikes!

But in this era of blockbuster superhero movies and over-the-top reality programming with trashy housewives, pregnant teens and people in New Jersey, it’s no wonder that many of us are seeking out films with a slower pace, aimed at the silent majority.



It was Thoreau who said: “Most men lead lives of quiet desperation and go to the grave with the song still in them.”

Well, in mid-life crisis movies, that truth is already known to the audience. But the protagonist decides to do something radical.

In “Lbs.,” now on Netflix, we not only get the mid-life crisis theme, but also the body-transformation theme – Neil Perota (Carmine Famiglietti) loses 100 pounds after escaping from his enabling Italian-American family – and we also get the move-from-the-City-to-Upstate theme.

After suffering a heart attack, 300-pound Perota tries to diet, but there are too many temptations in his Brooklyn neighborhood.

He goes for a ride up north to clear his head, ends up in a diner and picks up a local newspaper. He spots a real estate ad where he can “own his own piece of paradise” for \$5000 in Schoharie County.

Who hasn’t been tempted by such ads?

OK, the place is a dump, but he makes a go of it, spending a year in the woods, bicycling everywhere. When he eventually heads back to the City, people don’t recognize him he is so transformed. He recreated his own life in this inspirational, well-written tale.

Of course the ultimate move-Upstate movie is “Funny Farm” with Chevy Chase, which was a box office bomb in 1988 after his “Vacation” success.

OK, technically the film was shot

just a little over the border in Vermont, but the exact location of the film is never named in the story and most viewers assume it’s Upstate New York.

This is also on Netflix. While “Lbs.” paints Upstaters as more three-dimensional, I have to say some of the caricatures in “Funny Farm” ring a bell, as, like the Chase character, I’m a writer who moved from downstate up north. I even started a smalltown paper, as Chase is seen at the end of the film doing something similar after his dreams of writing a great novel are dashed by nosy neighbors, weird local laws, a crazed postman, wild animals and many unexpected expenses.

A bit older than “mid-life,” “Lovely, Still” recently hit Netflix and some of the movie channels. Dealing with a man with alzheimer’s who thinks he has found a new love, even a curmudgeon like me had a tear in my eye at the end. Such diseases never end well.

On Showtime, which a lot of people get for free now as a part of their cable service, the movie “The Beaver” just hit and is available on-demand. This also fits into the mid-life category.

Considering that Showtime rarely gets movies with A-listers anymore, when I read the brief synopsis – a man has

a nervous breakdown and when he comes out of it, he can only speak through a beaver hand-puppet – I was expecting a low-budget indie film, but instead got Mel Gibson, who seems to get men-



tioned a good deal in “It’s New to You,” and Jodie Foster and even one of the actors from “The Hunger Games.”

When I saw Gibson and Foster, I at first thought it was an older film I must have somehow missed back in the day. It looks like a late-’80s, early ’90s kind of film (Foster directed it), but upon research, I realized that this movie was just released last year – and it totally bombed, losing practically its whole \$21M budget. This was around the time Gibson’s most recent tirade was just hitting the media, which surely didn’t help.

Now, I wouldn’t say that “The Beaver” is a gem, but what makes a good sitting-at-home-on-a-rainy-day-while-also-doing-something-else movie is much different than what you would pay to see in a crowded theater with an \$8 popcorn. So you have to remember, when you read online reviews, they were written at the time of the theater release most often. “The Beaver” definitely fits into the understated type of genre that works on TV, where you can also surf the Net and play online Scrabble at the same time without missing much. This is even an unusual quality for a Gibson movie as often

there are subtitles in his flicks and one is forced to pay attention.

If you want to investigate any of the Netflix movies I mention, use the search (magnifying glass) feature on the service and type in the movie name. Not every movie will just show up by browsing. You have to seek out titles sometimes.

If you don’t have Netflix yet, what are you waiting for? For eight bucks a month, it covers all of your devices everywhere you go. You can stream it through your Wii or Playstation 3, as well. Some people even cancel their cable or satellite service and just live off a combination of Netflix



and a handful of local broadcast channels they get from the antenna.

Here’s a summer project – watch the first few seasons of “Breaking Bad” on Netflix. That show starts up live again on AMC July 15. I think it’s the best TV show ever made.



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A talk with Brad Meltzer (cont.)

when she died and I'd see the nurses or the waitresses in places she went, all they'd say is, "Oh, your mother was the best." As one receptionist reminded me, "Not everyone is nice like that." The truth about you is what people say behind your back. And I love my mother so much for that: From the Queen of England to the janitor in the bathroom, she'd treat you the same.

Q: You write with such authority about the Presidency and Washington, D.C.. Where does that come from? How do you get real Presidents to help you?

It's funny, I feel like I never used to write about the President. I always wrote about the staffer you'd never see — the one who knew how to stay two steps out of the picture. And then one day, I got the best fan letter ever, from former President George H.W. Bush, saying he liked my novel, "The Millionaires," and could I sign one for him. I'd gotten another couple of notes from President Clinton as well. And that just makes it a little easier to say, "Can I spend some time with you for research?" The best part is, because I write fiction, I always get to see far more than what they'd show a reporter who's out to burn them. Unlike so many conspiracy buffs I've met through the years, you're not jaded, not cynical, not angry. Where does that come from? Again, blame my family. My grandfather spent his whole life wanting to be a policeman. It was his dream. And he couldn't be one be-

cause of some dumb medical reason. But he was the toughest, strongest, most amazing tough guy around. And the nicest. What I remember most about him was when he used to give all our old used toys to kids that had no money. And this was from a guy who had no money. The true toughest guy knows he doesn't have be the tough guy.

Q: President Wallace is mesmerized by the written word, as so many of us are. I know your grandmother spent countless hours in the public library with you, devouring Judy Blume, Agatha Christie, Dr. Seuss. Stories change our lives, don't they? What does the written word mean to you, and what would you like readers to take from your books?

If readers could take one message from my books? Don't let anyone tell you "No."

Also, as Mr. Rogers taught me, remember how special you are. Corny for

sure. But, to steal a line from "The Inner Circle", we should never forget that history is a selection process. It chooses all of us. Every day. The only question is, do we hear that call?

Q: The reader follows your main character, Beecher, into the vaults and stacks that visitors don't see. But there

is very little mention of the documents that most people associate with the National Archives — the Constitution and Declaration of Independence. Was this a deliberate omission?

It was. Anyone can see the gasper documents — the documents that make you gasp. Every single tourist can see the Constitution and Declaration of Independence. What I want to show you are the places you can't go. The places only an insider sees. And yes — that underground storage cave at the end is real. I went there. Scaaary.

Q: What was the most surprising job that you saw a National Archives staff member doing?

I was most amazed by the fact that you still have people combing through documents from the founding of our country. In my google-influenced brain, I thought everything had already

been read and catalogued. I love that there are new Lincoln letters — and new secrets — being found every

single day.

Q: You've taken your love of secrets, mysteries, and conspiracies to the next level. You have a TV show about them. How did the show come about? Again, I got lucky. One of the heads of the History Channel read my thriller — "The Book of Fate" — and he

enjoyed all the Freemason secrets and the Thomas Jefferson code that was in there, and simply said, "We should do a show like that." So "Brad Meltzer's Decoded" as a TV show is just me doing exactly what I do in my novels, looking through history and trying to solve its greatest mysteries. One of my favorites is about the very first piece of the White House, which was laid in an elaborate ceremony in 1792. Within 24 hours, that cornerstone supposedly went missing. President Truman went looking for it. So did Barbara Bush. But for 200 years, no one knows where the very first piece of the White House is. Needless to say, I want to find it.

Q. Do you have any advice for people who want to be authors?

Don't let anyone tell you "No." I got twenty-four rejection letters on my first novel. It's still sitting on my shelf, published by Kinko's. I had twenty-four people tell me to give it up — that I couldn't write. But the day I got my twenty-third and twenty-fourth rejection, I said to myself, "If they don't like this novel, I'll write another, and if they don't like that one, I'll write another." Why? Because I fell in love with writing. A week later, I started the book that became "The Tenth Justice." Does that make everyone who sent me objections wrong? Not a chance. The best and worst part of publishing is that it's a subjective industry. All it takes is one person to say "Yes." You just have to find that person. If you love what you do, it'll show on the page. If you don't, it won't. That's the x-factor in every book. And that's what helps you move forward as a writer.

'We should never forget that history chooses all of us, every day.'

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Recession leaves older workers behind

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Kathryn Kenny
Scripps Howard Foundation Wire

Sheila Whitelaw, 71, spends her weekdays filling out job applications.

The Philadelphia resident lost her job during the recession two years ago after working for 13 years as sales associate and manager at a clothing boutique.

Whitelaw is among the growing number of elderly long-term, unemployed Americans who desire to continue working but say they are illegally discriminated against because of their age.

Today she is left unemployed with no hopes of a comfortable retirement, trying to make ends meet with a monthly Social Security payment and \$35 a month in food stamps. Her husband is in a nursing home.

"I look for work every day, including the weekends," Whitelaw said. "I can work, I want to work and I need to work. My age does not define my abil-

ity, negate my work experience or reduce my dedication to the job at hand."

The British native has a bachelor's degree in English literature from the London Academy and training in makeup application.

The Senate Special Committee on Aging held a hearing Tuesday focusing on finding solutions to reduce long-term unemployment among older workers.

Sen. Herb Kohl, D-Wis., chairman of the committee, discussed the many challenges older dislocated workers face, such as loss of Social Security credits through long-term unemployment periods, retirement funds, receiving affordable senior housing and paying for health care expenses.

"I moved into a smaller apartment with cheaper rent," Whitelaw said "I applied for food stamps, and never in my lifetime did I think I would have to do this."

A Government Accountability Office report says employers' reluctance

to hire older workers is primarily because they will have to provide costly health benefits. Employers also fear that older workers aren't able to use up-to-date computers.

The GAO report said that the unemployment rate for workers 55 and older has risen from 3.1 percent in 2007 to 7.6 in 2010.

Christine Owens, executive director of the National Employment Law Project, testified that prolonged periods of unemployment may have a severe impact on older workers' retirement prospects and well-being in later life. The committee addressed the issue that the majority of workers age 55 or older who lost their jobs in the recession are now experiencing a significant decline in savings. Few can afford to stop looking for work and retire.

Owens said the best way to reduce unemployment among older workers is for Congress to pass two bills, The Fair Employment Opportunity Act of 2011 and The Protecting Older Workers



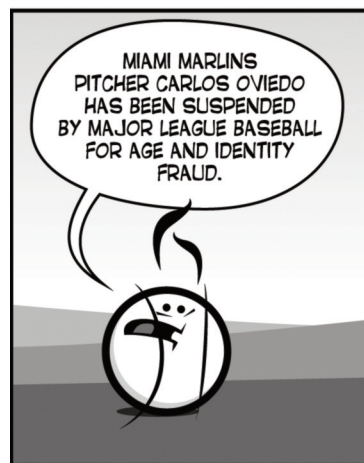
Sheila Whitelaw.

Against Discrimination Act.

The fair employment bill would prohibit discrimination against long-term unemployed Americans seeking employment. Witnesses said many employers prefer to hire people who already have jobs.

"At this point, I don't really expect to retire, even if I am able to find a job," Whitelaw said. "I plan to keep working as long as I am physically able, am I am blessed to be in good health. Contrary to what many employers think, age is just a number."

SMALL MARKET SPORTS by Bill Charbonneau



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Print newspapers hang in there

Darren Johnson
Campus News

Right next to me is a copy of the worst newspaper in America, perhaps the world. No, it is not **THIS** paper! (That would be impossible, anyway, as this paper couldn't possibly be published at the time of this writing, unless I had some sort of space-time media power, like in the old show "Early Edition," where the protagonist got tomorrow's paper today – and why would you think that anyway?)

I have a thing for bad papers. Like some movie aficionados must see Ed Wood films – so bad, they are good – I stop at out of the way pizzerias, gas stations and delis when on the road, and I am on the road a good deal, delivering newspapers, and pick up whatever local pubs I can find. I read through all of the stories and get into the heads of the people who live in these towns. I try to imagine what life might be like there.

Every year for the past decade, my wife, daughter and I do practically the same trip mid-winter. We fly to either Vegas or L.A. via Southwest Airlines (I wait for the bargain fares to pop up), visit Disneyland (no serious lines there in the winter; I hate lines) and while driving across the desert (I can do Disney to Vegas in three hours), we stop at this nowhere gas station with overpriced gas and get two things: Chocodiles, a Hostess pasty that no longer is available in the Northeast for whatever reason, and a copy of a horribly schlocky newspaper called The Nickel Shopper. It is based out of Victorville, Calif. Even the ads have misspellings. Many look like they were made

on a 1980s style Commodore 128 with a dot matrix printer.

I have kept a copy of this paper. I am unsure exactly why. Somewhere in my psyche in a dream-analysis kind of way there is an interpretation for my attachment to this paper.

But that is not the newspaper sitting next to me. My recent find was when I was in Putnam County, N.Y. While the ads in what's called Our Town look professional, and there are lots of them, the editorial copy is totally ridiculous.

The editor of this free publication just takes anything that is sent in and prints it. The cover story of the April 16 edition is some horrible fairy tale that is impossible

Believe me, Spielberg isn't reading it thinking **BLOCKBUSTER!**

Anyway, that this is a cover story in a publication that hits dozens of grocery stores, diners and delis, is a total slap in the face to the advertisers, who bought space in this thing. The rest of the stories just seem to be copy-pasted jokes from the Internet. I was in a pizza place when I picked this up and wondered, Who would read this? And if the content is not only

unreadable, but an actual deterrent to picking up the publication, the ads certainly aren't being read.

But it must be the only game in town, as there are lots of ads in it. It would seem a competitor could easily swoop in, publish a few readable stories, and steal all of the Our Town advertisers. I used to know an ad seller who would call that "prospecting."

But people aren't starting new publications anymore. The trend is mom-and-pop publishers going to the web and opening Patch franchises or sites like them. The only problem is Internet ads don't really work.

Maybe some types of digital ads work – say for attracting either really cheap purchases, like McNuggets, or for once-in-a-lifetime purchases, like a swimming pool – but for most items and services, people just ignore Internet ads. GM recently abandoned Facebook citing this. The national click-through rate for Internet ads is a measly .08%. That means less than one person out of a thousand clicks on an In-



Especially this one.

ternet ad. In most readership areas, that's like five clicks! If you're an advertiser, you'd have better luck tacking Xeroxed flyers on telephone poles.

Certainly, more than five people have read this article. And perhaps many even waded through "And They Lived Happily Ever After." Some people just need to read when they eat or wait for a barber or doctor. I'm in that club, and apparently you are, too.

Phone books are mostly gone, many places, including New York City, are taking down billboards as they are eyesores, and we've already realized that Internet ads are a waste, so, for many small communities publications like The Nickel Shopper and Our Town are the only game in town for advertisers.

So maybe I hang on to these publications because, warts and all, they hang on.

I'm thinking this publication may do the same.

No matter how outlandish,
a paper publication just does
a better job of being found.

to follow. After the writer's byline – I won't name him – it says Copyright 2003. So this story, adorned with clipart of a dragon, a wizard and a princess around a castle, titled, "And They Lived Happily Ever After," was first written nine years ago?! The author didn't rethink this story (and delete it!) in all this time? He has not written something better?

The story is not only bookended by copyright notices, but also a disclaimer that it is a work of fiction, all characters are coincidental, it may not be reprinted, etc., etc. What a sad way to go through life, worried that someone will steal your nine year old, two-page fairy tale. That someone might mistake a story with dragons and wizards as non-fiction and sue.

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